

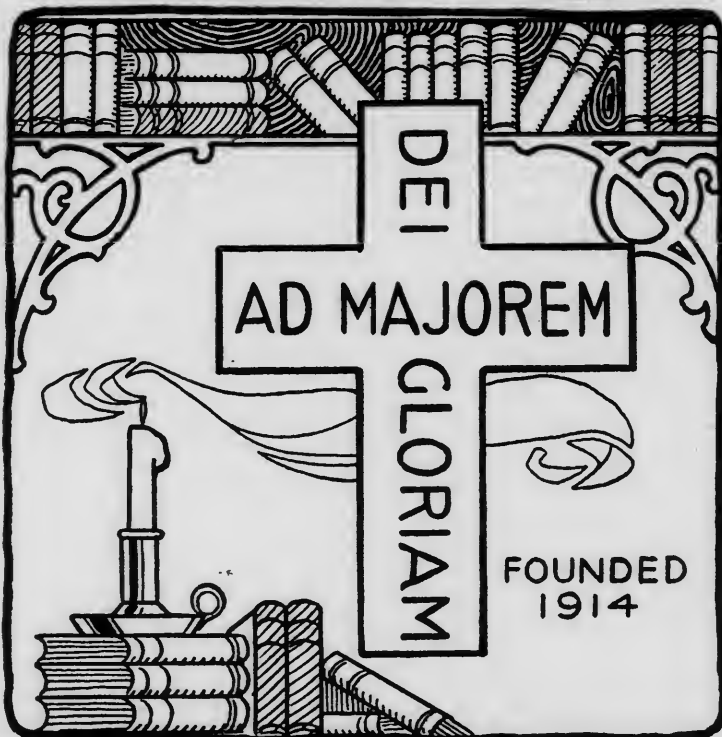
THE HISTORY

OF DAVYHULME

WESLEYAN CHAPEL.

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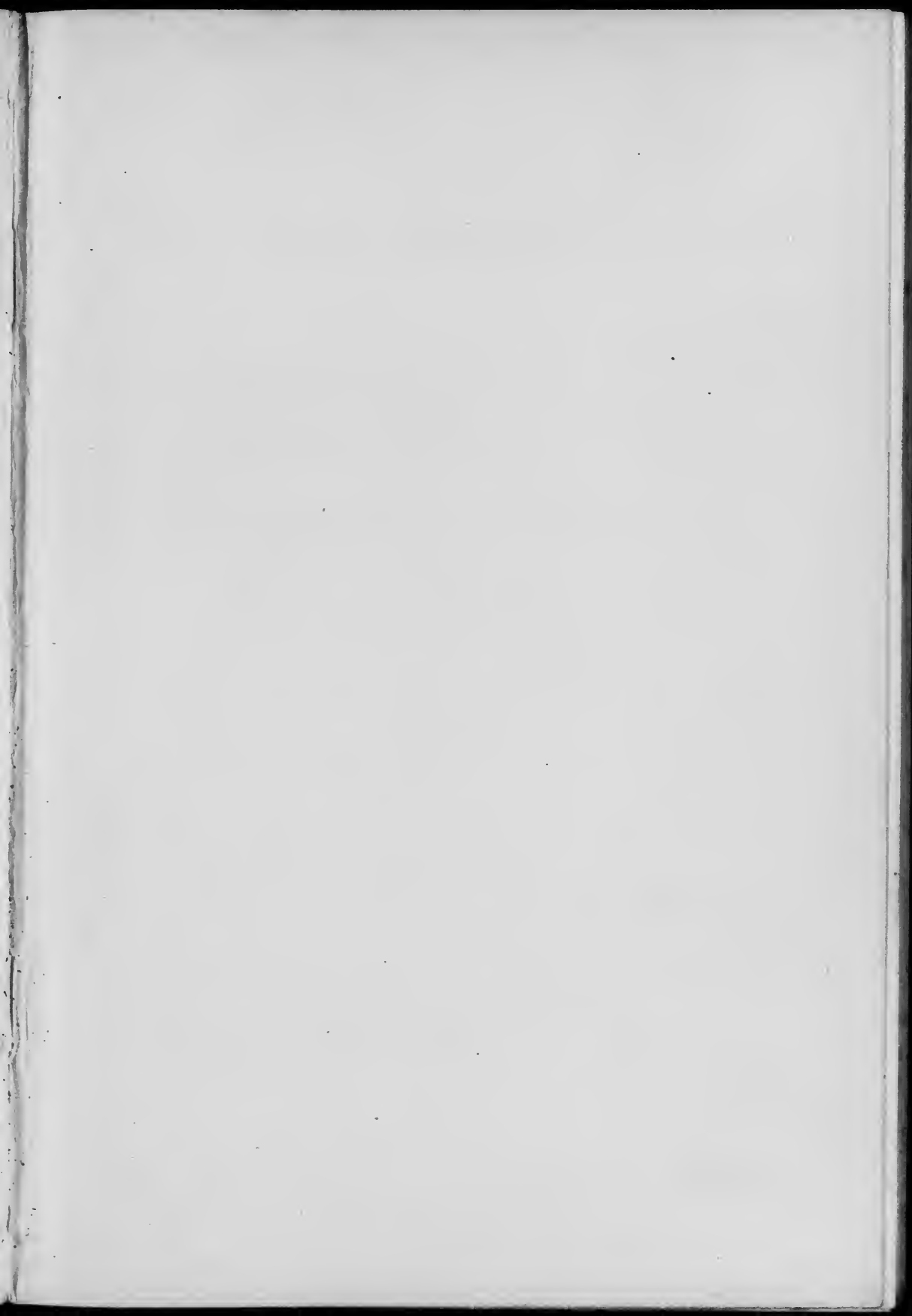
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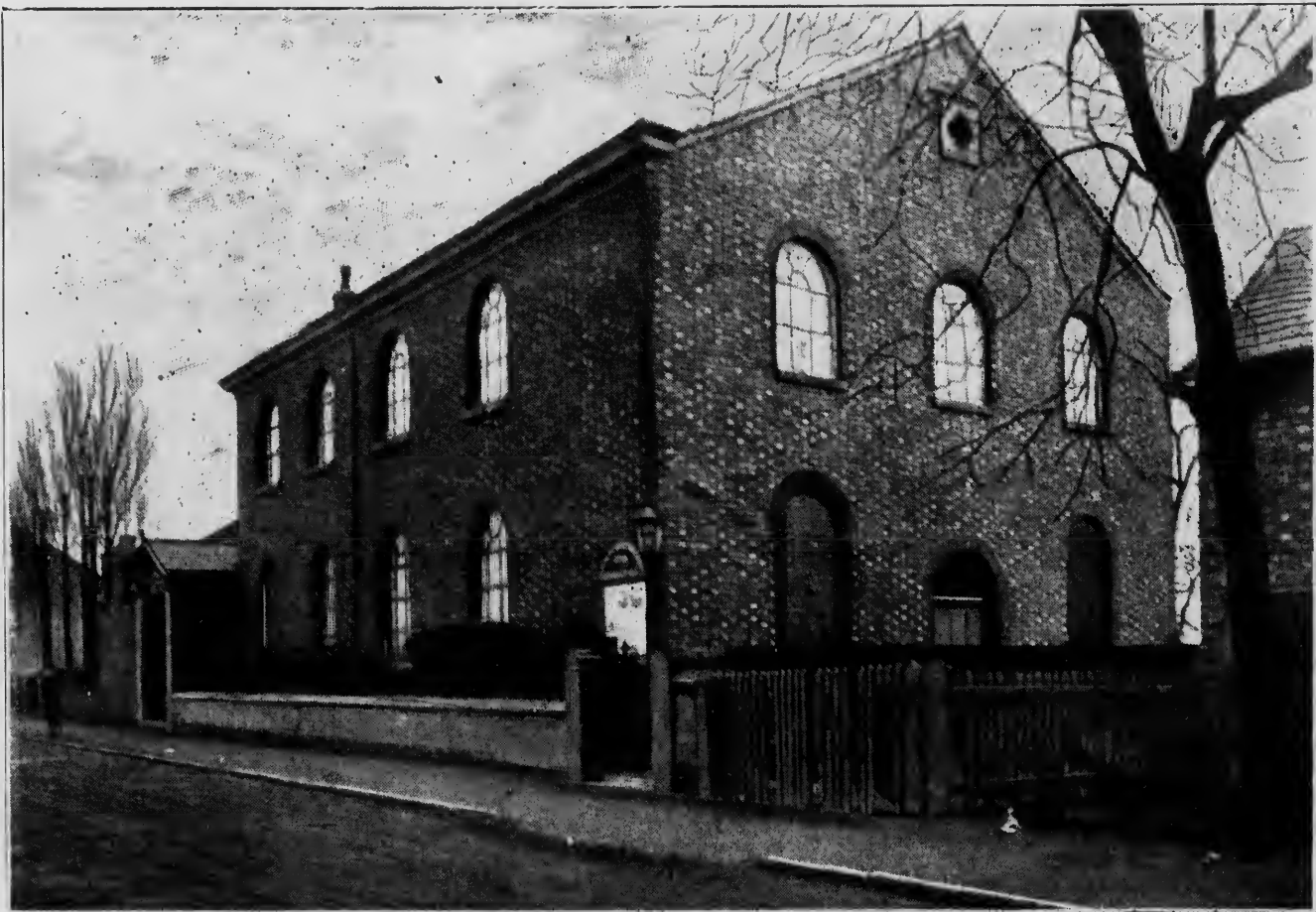
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WESLEYAN CHAPEL, DAVYHULME.

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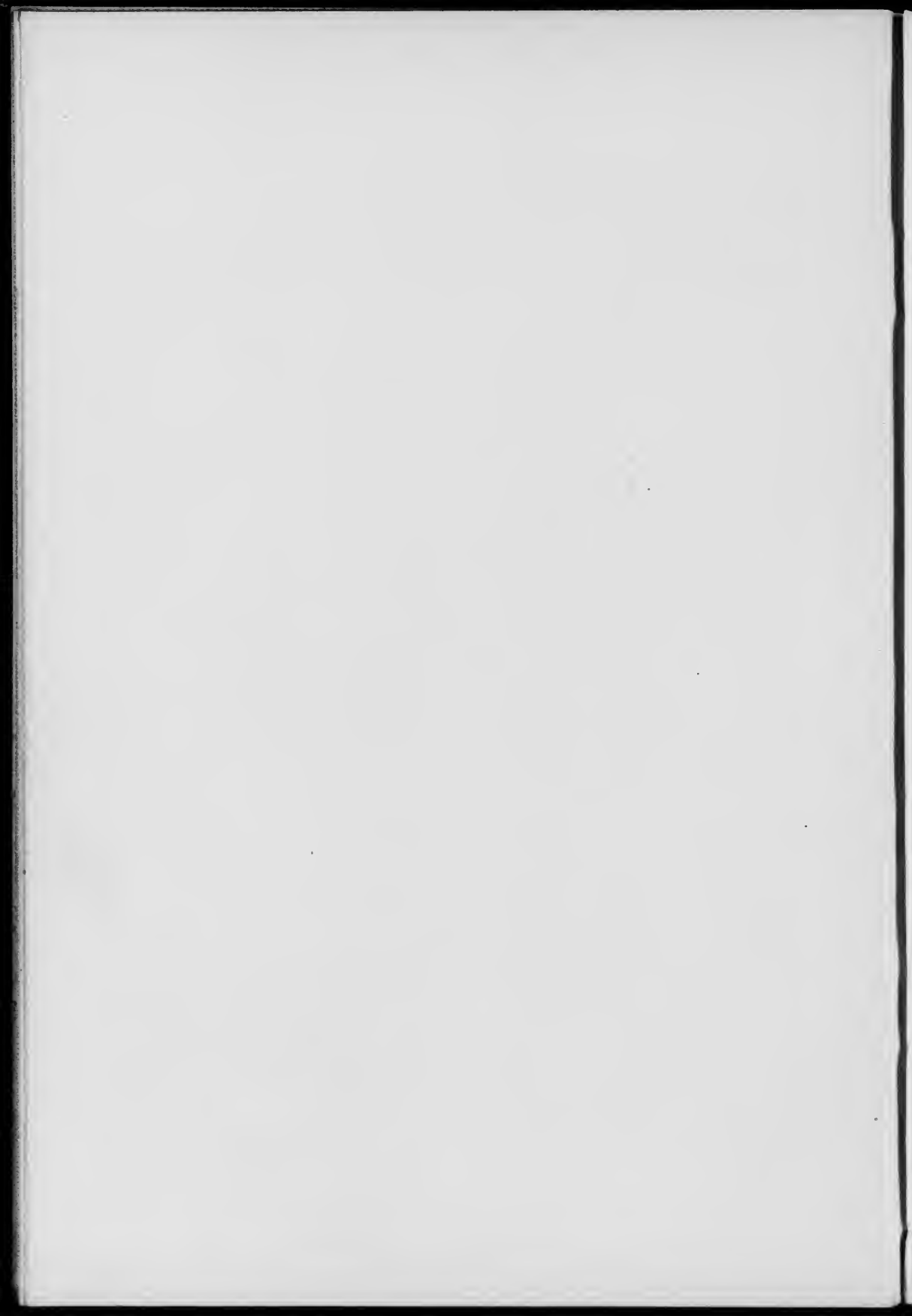
THE
HISTORY OF METHODISM
IN DAVYHULME:

TOGETHER WITH
AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER ON THE ORIGIN OF
METHODISM IN MANCHESTER.

BY THE
REV. ALLAN SPENCER.
(URMSTON.)



MANCHESTER:
W. H. LANDLESS, 8, ST. MARY'S STREET, DEANS GATE.
1898.



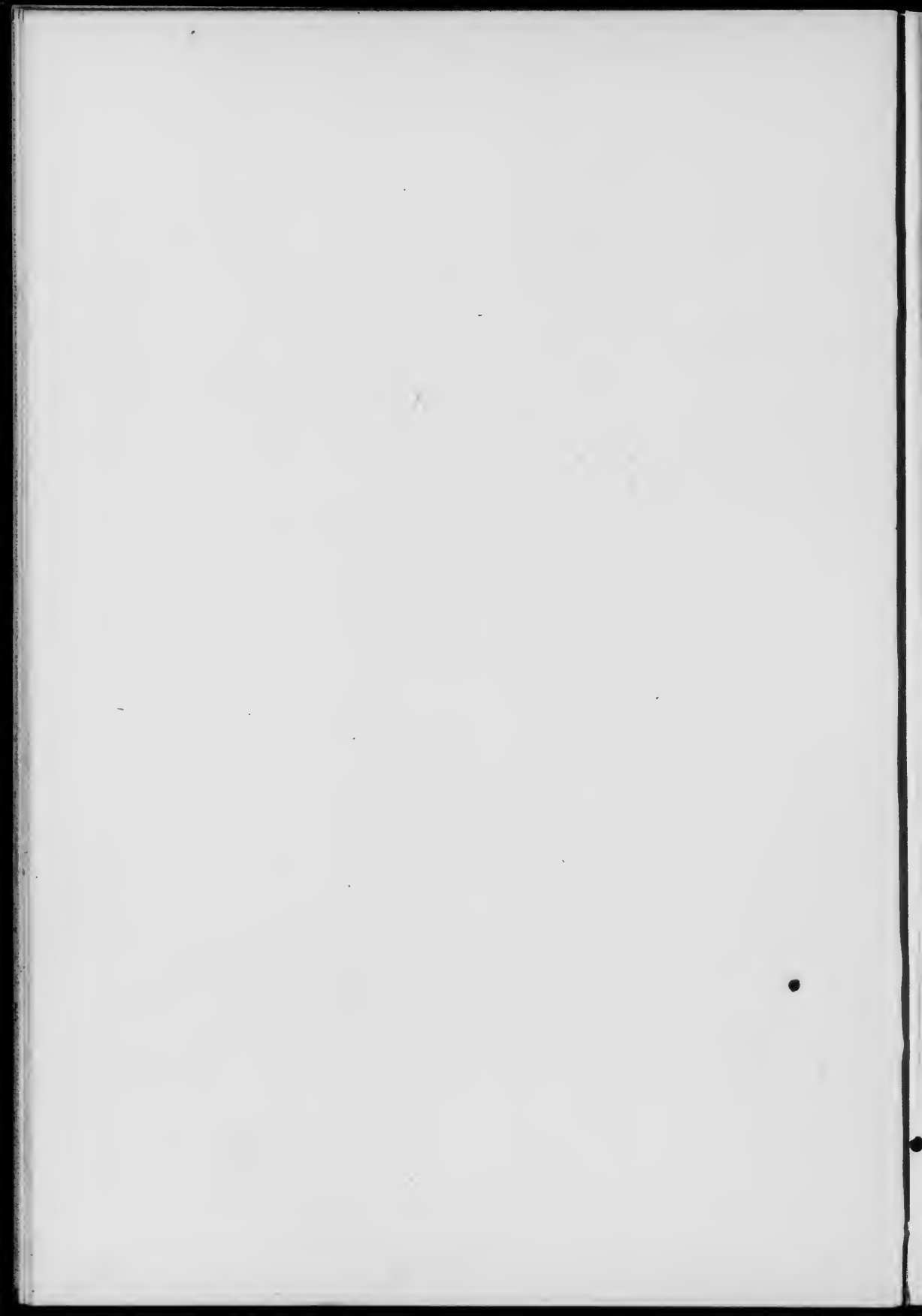
PREFACE.

IN connection with the celebration of the Tri-Jubilee of the Founding of Methodism in Davyhulme, it was felt it would be a fitting occasion to publish such reminiscences of the history of the work of God in this time-honoured sanctuary as could be gathered together.

One can only regret that this work was not undertaken much earlier, when many of the old friends were alive who could have rendered valuable assistance, and in publishing this small volume, the author would apologise for the scantiness of some of the information, occasioned by the death of many of the oldest members, and the scarcity of any recorded historical notes; also for all errors and omissions which might have been avoided by one familiar, by long residence, with the place and the people. To these notes I have also added an introductory chapter—which I trust may afford additional interest—on the origin of Methodism in Manchester. For the information received, I would desire especially to express my thanks to the Rev. E. Martin; Mr. Gill, of Eccles; Mr. Willcock, of Urmston, and to many friends at Davyhulme and elsewhere, for their kind help in lending old Plans, Methodist magazines, &c.; also to Mr. Wm. Walkden, of Flixton, to whom I am indebted for many of the photographic illustrations.

ALLAN SPENCER.

URMSTON.



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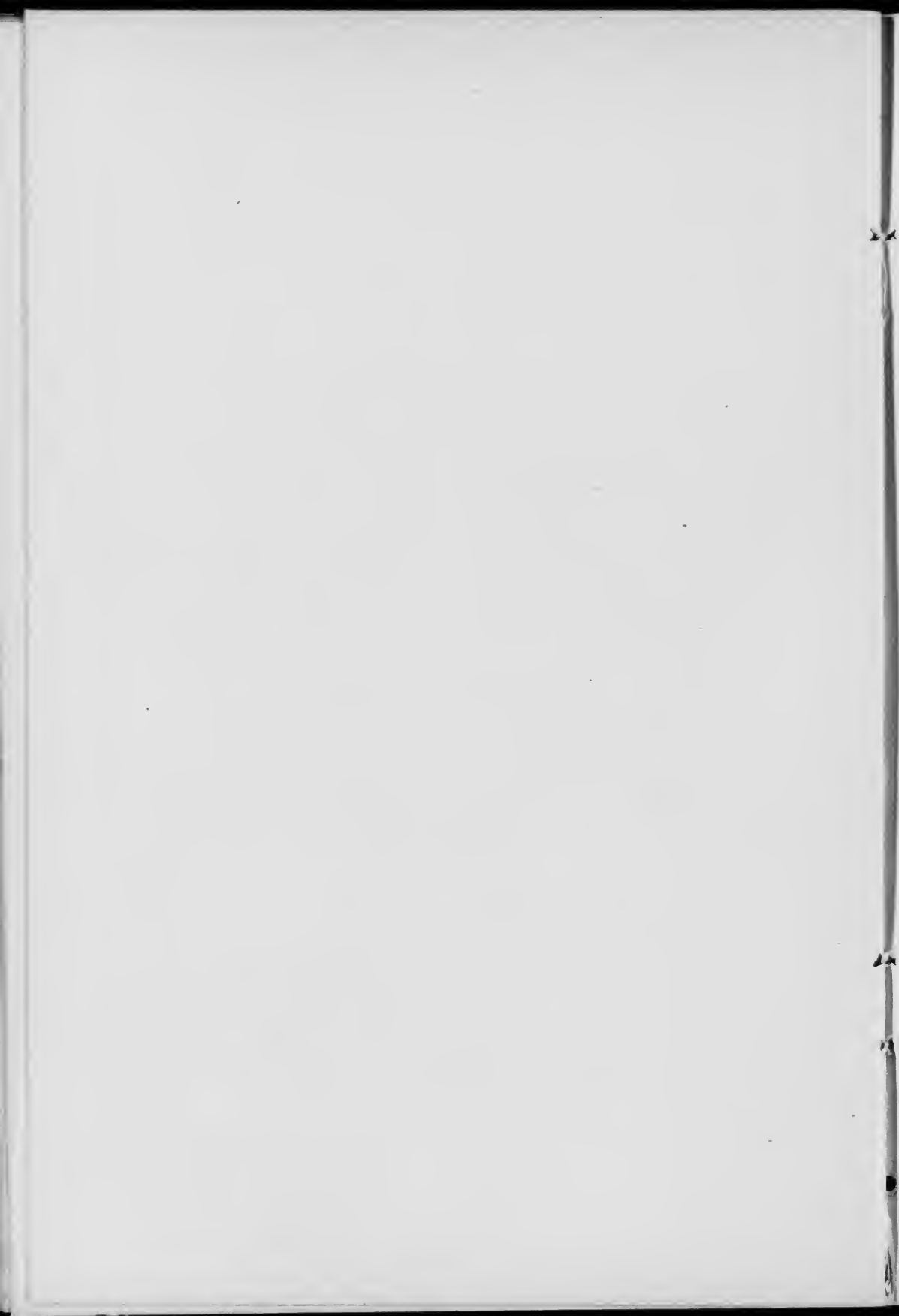
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CHAPTER I.

The Origin of Methodism in Manchester.

MANCHESTER was one of the first centres in England where the voices of Wesley and Whitfield were heard. The way for the introduction of Methodism into Manchester was paved by a clergyman of the Church of England, Rev. John Clayton, one of the members of the "Oxford Society," who became chaplain and then fellow of the old Collegiate Church, now the Cathedral of Manchester.

Mr. Clayton's house was always the resort of the Oxford Methodists whenever they came to Manchester, and Mr. Wesley thrice visited his friend before the date of his conversion. So highly did Mr. Wesley esteem his judgment, that he travelled all the way to Manchester to seek his counsel in May, 1733, before refusing the living at Epworth, and again in 1735, before accepting the call to the mission field in Georgia, and in 1738 Mr. Clayton's house was one of the earliest homes visited after his return from America. On this last occasion, March 19th, 1738, he preached at Mr. Clayton's church, at Salford, in the morning, and at St. Ann's Church, St. Ann's Square, in the afternoon, and after the visit returned to London *via* Knutsford.

George Whitfield came to Manchester in November, 1735, on his way from Dublin to London, and preached twice on that occasion. It appears that nine years elapsed before Mr. Wesley again visited this city, and the reason for this long absence at the important time of the founding of Methodism here seems to have been the fact that his friends, Rev. John Clayton and Mr. (afterwards Dr.) John Byrom, M.A., of Kersal (author of "Christians, awake"), had espoused the cause of the Young Pretender. Wesley, not having any sympathy with the Jacobite movement, thought it best, at this particular juncture, to keep away. Notwithstanding this precaution, much odium was heaped upon the early Methodists of this district, who were accused of complicity in the attempt to put Prince Charles on the throne.

During these nine years much of importance happened. First and foremost was the conversion of the two brothers, John and Charles Wesley. From this time forward the pulpits of the Established Church were one after another closed against them, until they were forced to find pulpits outside those "human temples made with hands," in the great temple God had made, with His own blue heavens for a canopy, and they found pulpits on gravestones and market crosses, around which crowds so vast gathered to hear the Word of God, that no earthly sanctuary could have held them. It was from this fact that John Wesley's famous saying, carved upon his memorial tablet in Westminster Abbey, arose, "I look upon all the world as my parish."

Amongst the first towns visited by Mr. Wesley, after his conversion, were Bristol and Newcastle, and in the former the first Methodist chapel in Great Britain was built, on a site near the Horse Fair, close to St. James's Churchyard, the stone-laying taking place on May 12th, 1739.

Mr. Wesley soon gathered round him a band of "Helpers," and these men joined him in his great work of preaching the gospel to the masses. They were sent out on preaching tours known as "ROUNDS," and this word was retained in popular use for many years, even after the circuit system was adopted. The rounds were often known by the name of the preacher rather than by the names of the places visited.

In 1747 the country was mapped into seven of these itinerant districts:—Wales, Cornwall, Newcastle, Yorkshire, London, Bristol, and Evesham. The Yorkshire round, in which Manchester was included, comprised Chinley (Derbyshire), Macclesfield, Burslem, Chester, Holywell (Flintshire), Liverpool, Whitehaven (Cumberland), and Bolton, with many intermediate towns and villages. The preacher resided at Chinley. It was known as "Bennett's round," and it took six weeks for the preacher to make the tour of his circuit. At this time they were usually stationed on a round for twelve months.

At the Conference held in Manchester, in 1765, the first held in this city, the Minutes, which from that year began to be published annually, and contained the stations of the preachers, and minute rules for the discipline of

both the preachers and the societies, show that there were—

25 Circuits and 71 Preachers in England.

4 Circuits and 4 Preachers in Scotland.

2 Circuits and 2 Preachers in Wales.

8 Circuits and 15 Preachers in Ireland.

Other interesting notes are also found in the Minutes of this year: the Conference ordered (not recommended) that in the public services men and women should sit apart; that lovefeasts should not be allowed to last longer than an hour and a half; and that every member should be at home by nine o'clock. As we read these somewhat stringent rules under which our fathers lived, we are tempted to exclaim, surely "the lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places." Severe, however, as the rules were, they made strong characters and noble lives, and we shall do well if we seek to copy their godly zeal.

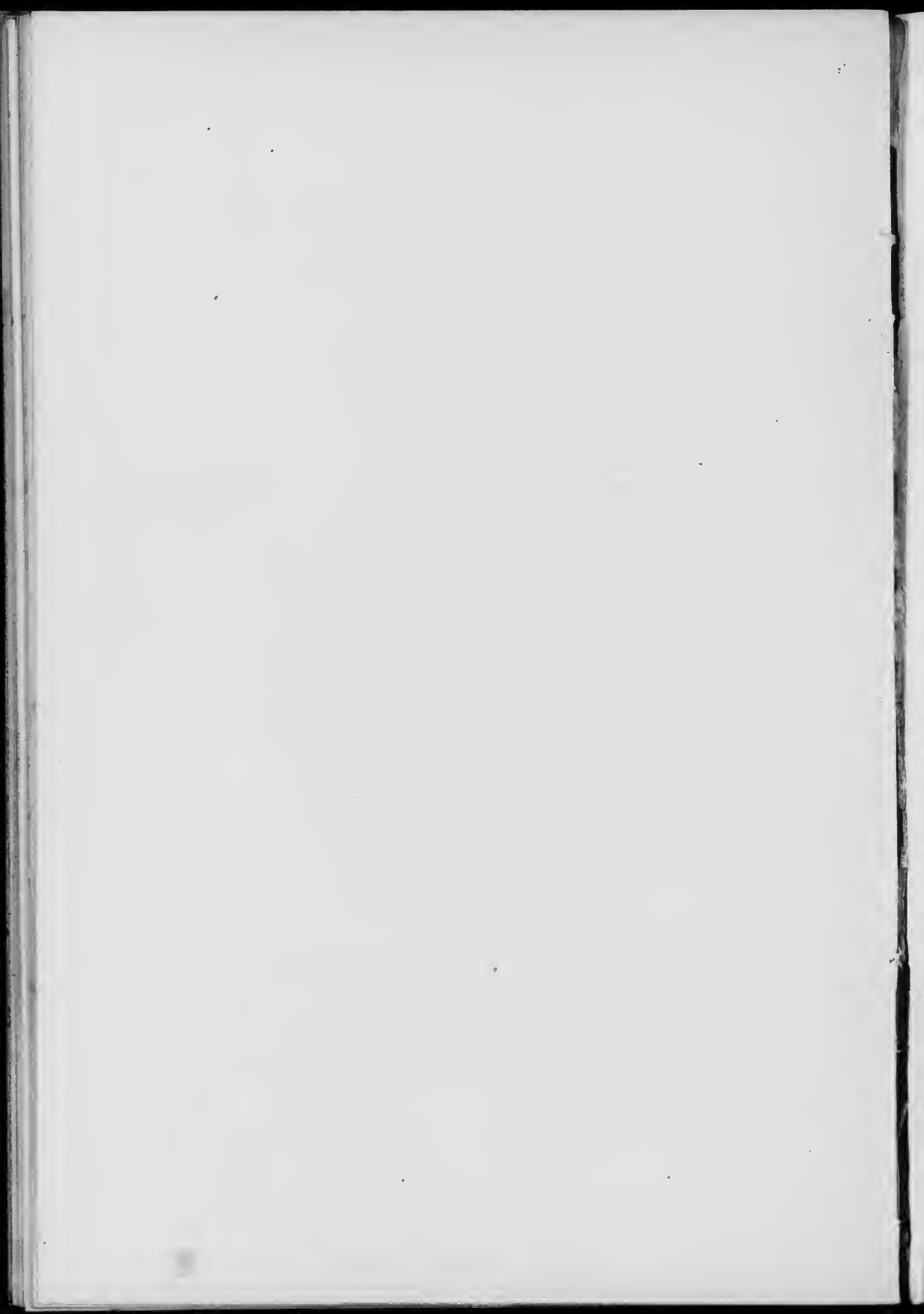
At the end of this chapter there will be found a list of the subsequent divisions of the Manchester Circuit.

The first Methodist sermon was preached in Manchester by John Nelson, the converted Yorkshire stonemason, in the open air at the Manchester Cross, on a Sunday afternoon, in 1742.

About 2,000 people were present, and though the preacher was wounded by a stone, and the constable attempted to seize both John Nelson and his companion John Bennett, the crowd forbade. After service the preachers rode back to Woodley, near Stockport, to the house of Jonathan Holmes, where, Mr. Nelson says, "they



JOHN NELSON.



had a blessed meeting, and the Lord was much with us all the time I stayed in those places."

For several years after this, however, Methodism did not seem to touch Manchester, but it was gradually gaining ground in the districts all round, and in various parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

Mr. Wesley spent some time in these two counties from 1745 to 1747, but seemed carefully to avoid Manchester, probably for the reasons named above.

In March, 1747, John Bennett, writing to Mr. Wesley, says: "Some young men in Manchester (that spoke with Mr. Charles when he was with us last) have begun a society and took a room, and have subscribed their names in a letter to Mr Charles, desiring you will own them as brethren, and visit them on your return. They also desire that any of us Helpers in the Gospel may call on them. I have sent their letter to London. Dear sir, do not forget us."

This letter appears to have reached Wesley early in March, and early in the May following he was in Manchester.

This room taken by the young men was the garret of a three-storeyed brick building, with thatched roof, in the yard of an old inn known as the "Rose and Crown," on the banks of the Irwell, near Blackfriars Bridge. Both the house and the inn disappeared about 1805, and the present Blackfriars Bridge was erected, with the consequent widening of the road, in 1819. It is believed that the "Textile Mercury" offices now cover the site of this once famous preaching room.

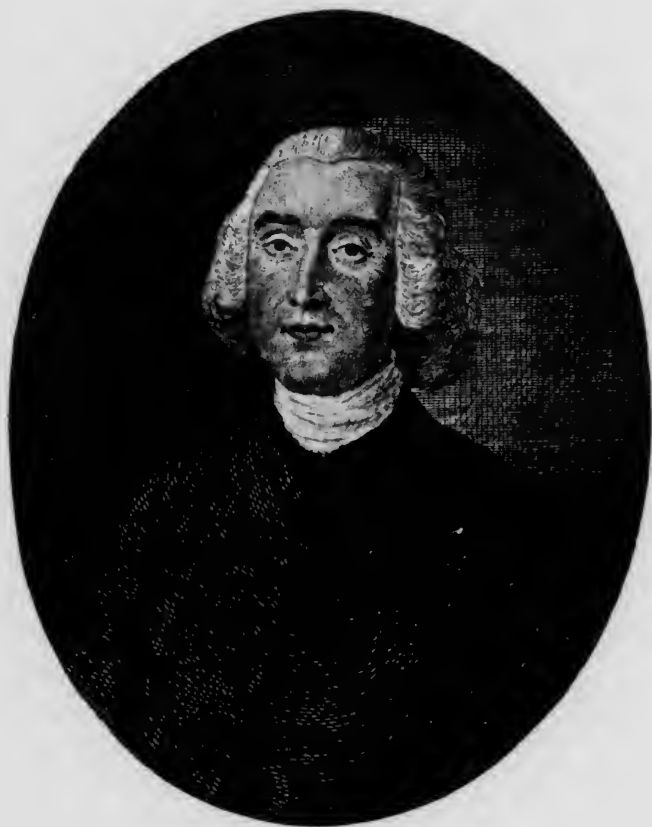
Christopher Hopper opened the services in this room, and in speaking before the Conference in Oldham Street Chapel, some years after, said: "You have here what may be considered a noble edifice, and have now become a great people, but I recollect the time when you were few in number. When I first came among you, I preached in an old garret that overhung the river. The coals were in one corner, the looms in another, and I was in danger of breaking my neck in getting up to it. The congregation consisted of from twenty to thirty persons."

It was from such a beginning the Methodism of Manchester sprung, and as we behold it to-day we can only say, "What hath God wrought!"—"Surely the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

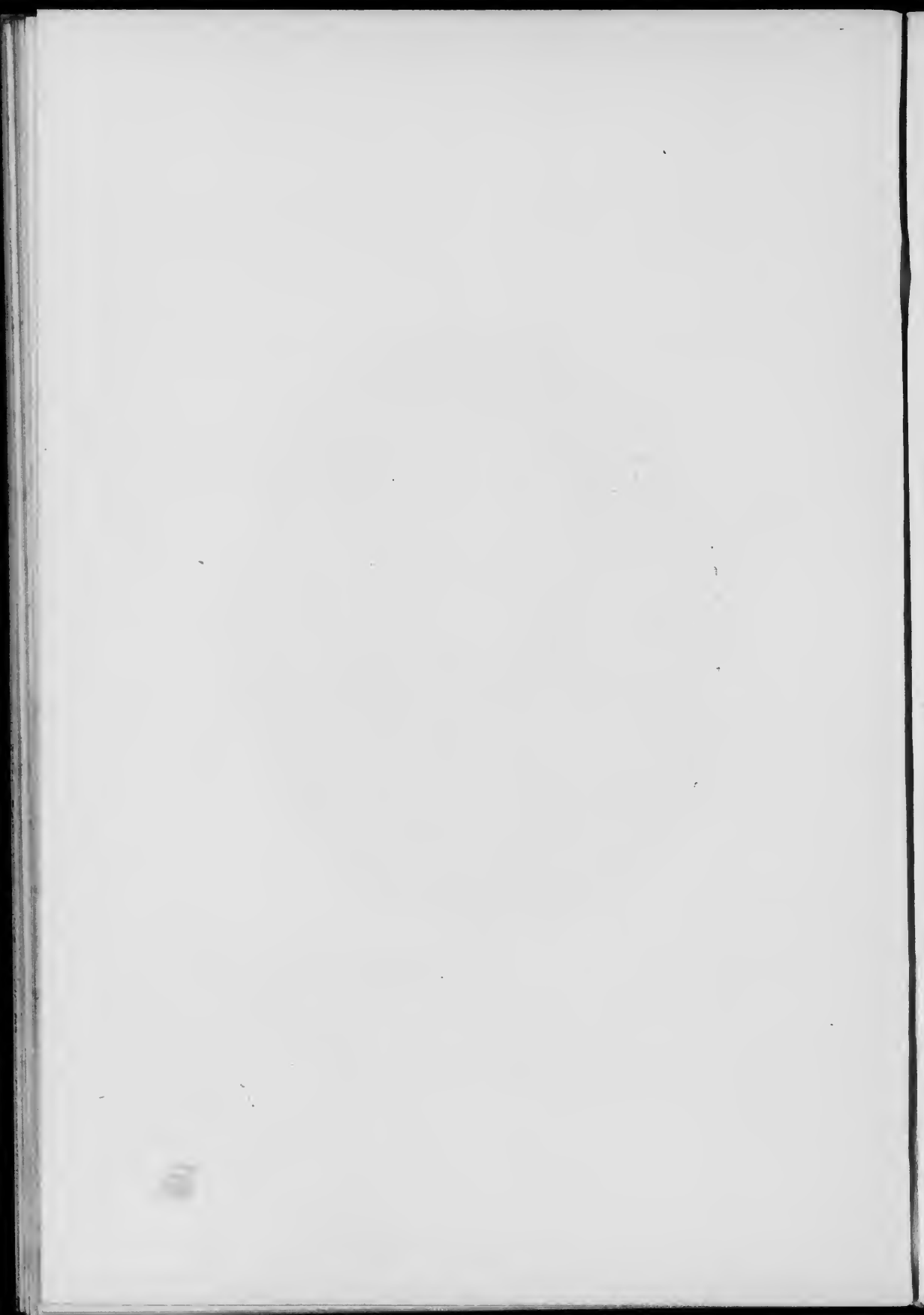
This Christopher Hopper was first brought under conviction of sin under the ministry of Mr. Wesley, and led to decision for Christ under Mr. Reeves. He became a preacher and founded Methodism in scores of towns and villages. He usually led a class every night and preached three or four times on Sunday. He was the first lay preacher who went to Scotland, and throughout the North of England his memory is still cherished.

So powerful and attractive was Mr. Hopper's preaching, that we are told "the congregation multiplied every meeting," and at last, with the crowd within, and the crowd without unable to gain admission, the floor of this poor old garret gave way.

Fortunately, through the preacher's presence of mind and his calm control of the meeting, no persons were injured, but the little society became homeless.



CHRISTOPHER HOPPER.



The Rev. — Winterbotham, a Baptist preacher, most generously granted them the use of the chapel of which he was the pastor, in Withy Grove, in the district called "Cold-house," and the very next evening the services were continued. The society at this time only numbered about 30 members. Here they were kindly allowed to remain until 1751, when the first Methodist chapel in Manchester was opened in Birchen Lane.

Birchen Lane was a narrow street off High Street, at that time a residential neighbourhood, and was known as "Brickcroft."

It is believed John Wesley opened the chapel on Easter Sunday of that year. This is stated to have been the tenth specially built Methodist chapel in England, and the second in Lancashire. It remained the headquarters of Methodism in Manchester until Oldham Street was built in 1781. Originally it seated about 300 people.

In Manchester in the middle of last century the warehouse as separate from the residence was hardly known. Market Street then extended only a little beyond High Street, the roadway sloping towards the narrow stream of water known as the Tib. Beyond were fields, and Ardwick Green was a fashionable suburb. When the Oldham Street Chapel was opened by Wesley, in 1781, he remarked that "he was afraid it was too far in the country."

In response to the letter from Mr. Bennett, quoted above, we find that Mr. Wesley came to Manchester on Thursday, May 7th, 1747. Concerning that visit we read in his "Journal":

"We came to Manchester between one and two. I had no thought of preaching here till I was informed that John Nelson had given public notice that I would preach at one. I was now in a great strait. Their house would not contain a tenth part of the people, and how the unbroken spirits of so large a town would endure preaching in the street I knew not. But after considering that I was not going awarfare at my own cost, I walked straight up to Salford Cross. A numberless crowd of people partly ran before, partly followed me. I thought it best not to sing, but, looking round, asked abruptly, 'Why do you look as if you had never seen me before? Many of you have seen me in the neighbouring church, both preaching and administering the sacraments.' I then began, 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near.' None interrupted us at all or made any disturbance. A big man thrust in with two or three more, and bade them 'bring out the fire engine.' Our friends desired me to remove into a yard close by, which I did, and concluded in peace."

From this service he rode straight out to Davyhulme, where, he tells us, "he was much refreshed both in preaching and meeting the society."

Space will forbid a lengthened history of the continuance of the work in Manchester; we must now come to the immediate subject for which this book has been written.

Perhaps the list of circuits given opposite will reveal more adequately than many pages of notes the growth of Methodism in Manchester.

The Lord's Day Plan of the Methodist Preachers in Salford Circuit. 1814.

PLACES.	Foren.	Altern.	Eveng.	May				June				July				PREACHERS.		
				1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	3	10	17		24	31
Salford	10 ¹	2 ¹	5 ¹	1B	2S	3	1	2	3C	1S	2	3	1B	2S	3M	5	2	1 C. Kirkpatrick
Davyhulme	10 ¹		5 ¹	21	4	19	6	18	5	7	L	14	13	10	8	15	12	2 Thomas Dowty
Irham	10 ¹	2 ¹		2	3	14	2	T	1C	10	3	S	2	15	1M	2	3	3 William Jones
Worsley	10 ¹	2		5	9	2S	4	11	10C	3	T	8	17	1M	18	6	4	4 Robert Brierley
Wakden Moor	10 ¹	2 ¹		7a	19	10	15	5	2TC	11	4	12b	3S	9	6M	16	17	5 Stephen Russell
Swinton	10 ¹	2 ¹	5 ¹	10	5L	7	3	T	6C	14	c	1S	6	11	2M	13	5	6 Thomas Owen
Barton	10 ¹	2 ¹	5 ¹	12	15	1S	13	20	9C	2	T	5	7	4	3M	16	19	7 George Barlow
Eccles	10 ¹	2 ¹	5 ¹	3	6	11	8	c	4C	5	9	2	21	7Mb	13	3	S	8 Thomas Dibble
Pendleton	10 ¹		5 ¹	20	12	11	16	b	17C	5	19	c	18	a	13M	14	21	9 Lee Speakman
Clifton		2 ¹		18	8	5	17	7	21C	a	6	20	15	12M	4	b	13	10 James Radford
Height			5 ¹	8	c	18	12	10	13C	19	20	5	11	14M	10	c	20	11 William Walton
Carrington				11	17	b	9	a	16C	15	21	17	c	19	5M	11	14	12 Richard Hulme
Partington		2		11	17	b	9	a	16C	15	21	17	c	19	5M	11	14	13 James Munday
Urmston		2		14	16	a	5	17	11C	b	13	15	8	21M	17	9	a	14 William Marsden
Stretford			5 ¹	14	16	a	5	17	11C	b	13	15	8	21M	17	9	a	15 John Derbyshire
Kersal Moor			6	19	13	20	21	14	12C	18	15	19	5	20M	c	7	8	16 Joseph Barlow
Mossley Common		2		b		21d		9d			10cd			16Md		12d		17 Noah Bent
																		18 James Mouncey
																		19 William Westernman
																		20 Albany Daniel
																		21 Joseph Bennon

S, The Lord's Supper; L, Love Feast; T, Tickets; B, Baptism; the parents to be present; C, Quarterly Collection; M, Missionary Collection; d, to preach at Worsley, at half past five o'clock.

Quarter Day, June 20th; the Preachers to meet at ten o'clock. Their Monthly Meetings to be May 13th, June 10th, and July 8th, at half past seven o'clock, in the Vestry.

Preaching in Salford Chapel every Wednesday evening at 7 o'clock. —a, b, and c, will take care to supply their places.

Referring to an old plan of the Manchester Circuit for 1811, we find that in that year there were 40 preaching places in the circuit, with 40 preachers and 6 "on trial." Of these places, however, not more than 10 or 12 had chapels.

Davyhulme takes precedence as being one of the oldest in the district, having been opened by Mr. Wesley himself in 1779. Oldham Street was opened in 1781; Altrincham, 1790; Gravel Lane, 1791; Barton, 1796; Great Bridgewater Street, 1801; Worsley, 1801; Chorlton-cum-Hardy, 1805; Swan Street, 1808; Walkden, 1810. At all the rest of the places cottages or rooms were used.

In 1813 the Manchester Circuit was again divided, and the Salford Circuit was formed with a group of 12 places and 1,663 members. At this time Gravel Lane had 465 members; Davyhulme, 211; Carrington, 20; Partington, 10; Barton, 90; and Stretford, 12.

In 1827, Eccles, Davyhulme, Partington, Carrington, and Stretford were taken from the Salford Circuit and incorporated in the newly-formed Great Bridgewater Street Circuit.

MANCHESTER CIRCUITS.

CIRCUIT.	FORMED.	DETACHED FROM.
Lancashire	1765	
Lancashire, North.....	1766	Lancashire.
Lancashire, South.....	1766	Lancashire.
Manchester	1770	Lancashire, South.
Stockport	1786	Manchester.
Stockport, Tiviotdale	1839	Stockport.
Stockport, Trinity.....	1839	Stockport.
Oldham	1791	Manchester.
Altrincham	1811	Manchester.
Altrincham, re-united ...	1812	
Altrincham, re-formed ...	1838	Gt. Bridgewater Street.
Irwell Street	1813	Manchester.
(Salford Circuit to 1826.)		
Oldham Street	1824	Manchester.
Grosvenor Street	1824	Oldham Street.
Gt. Bridgewater Street ...	1827	Oldham Street.
(Manchester 4th Circuit.)		
Oxford Road.....	1846	Grosvenor Street.
Gravel Lane	1860	Irwell Street.
Cheetham Hill	1863	Oldham Street.
Radnor Street	1867	Oxford Road.
City Road	1872	Gt. Bridgewater Street.
Cadishead	1872	Leigh, Lancashire.
Regent Road.....	1875	Irwell Street.
Victoria	1878	Oldham Street.
Longsight	1879	Grosvenor Street.
Oldham Road	1882	Oldham Street.
Sale	1886	Altrincham.
Eccles	1888	Gt. Bridgewater Street.
Pendleton	1893	Irwell Street.
Droylsden	1897	Longsight.

CHAPTER II.

The Origin of Methodism in Davyhulme.

THE exact date of the founding of Methodism in Davyhulme is uncertain, but it would appear from the following extract, taken from the Methodist Magazine for 1816, that Matthew Mayer was the honoured servant of God through whose instrumentality Methodism was first introduced. In a biographical sketch of this godly and zealous pioneer preacher, we read: "He was a good soldier of Jesus Christ amongst the early Methodists, and laboured mightily amongst them as a humble local preacher. He lived at Stockport, where he became the ninth member of the Class. For three years he was seeking peace with God. He found it at last, and then went about the country preaching it to others. Accompanied by John Morris, an early layman, of Manchester, he established Public Prayer Meetings at Davyhulme, Dukinfield, Ashton, and other places. At Davyhulme he gathered fifty converts into classes in a few weeks, and several useful preachers were raised up by his labours. Wesley encouraged him to go about preaching, and for twenty years he went up and down the land with surprising success. There were few towns in Cheshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, South

Lancashire, and West Yorkshire he did not visit. In his late years he supplied Oldham Street Chapel once a month, and no man attracted larger congregations."

There seems to have been a society at Davyhulme, at all events early in the year 1746, for John Bennett, the preacher in whose "round" Manchester was situated, writing to Mr. Wesley, on March 7th of that year, says:

"On Monday, the 2nd inst., as I was expounding in John Heywood's house at Davyhulme, five miles from Manchester, a band of wicked, drunken men, with clubs and staves, having a petty steward of a neighbouring gentleman at their head as captain or leader, and gathering together by the blowing of a horn, came and assaulted the house, breaking the windows and pulling the thatch off the roof. I was obliged to leave off expounding, and we fell on our knees and prayed. The shouts and exclamations after some time abated, and I spoke again to the people. No sooner had I begun than the bells of Eccles and Flixton began to ring, and then they broke into the house. I was directed to go away to a friend's house, which I did; so I escaped their malice. I found such sweet solid peace as I had never before done in trouble."

Unfortunately I have not been able to discover where this John Heywood lived, but it was through his instrumentality that Mr. Wesley was first induced to visit Davyhulme, and the above notes will explain the record in his journal, under date *Thursday, May 7th, 1747*, which runs as follows, and shows that a society had been established before that date:—

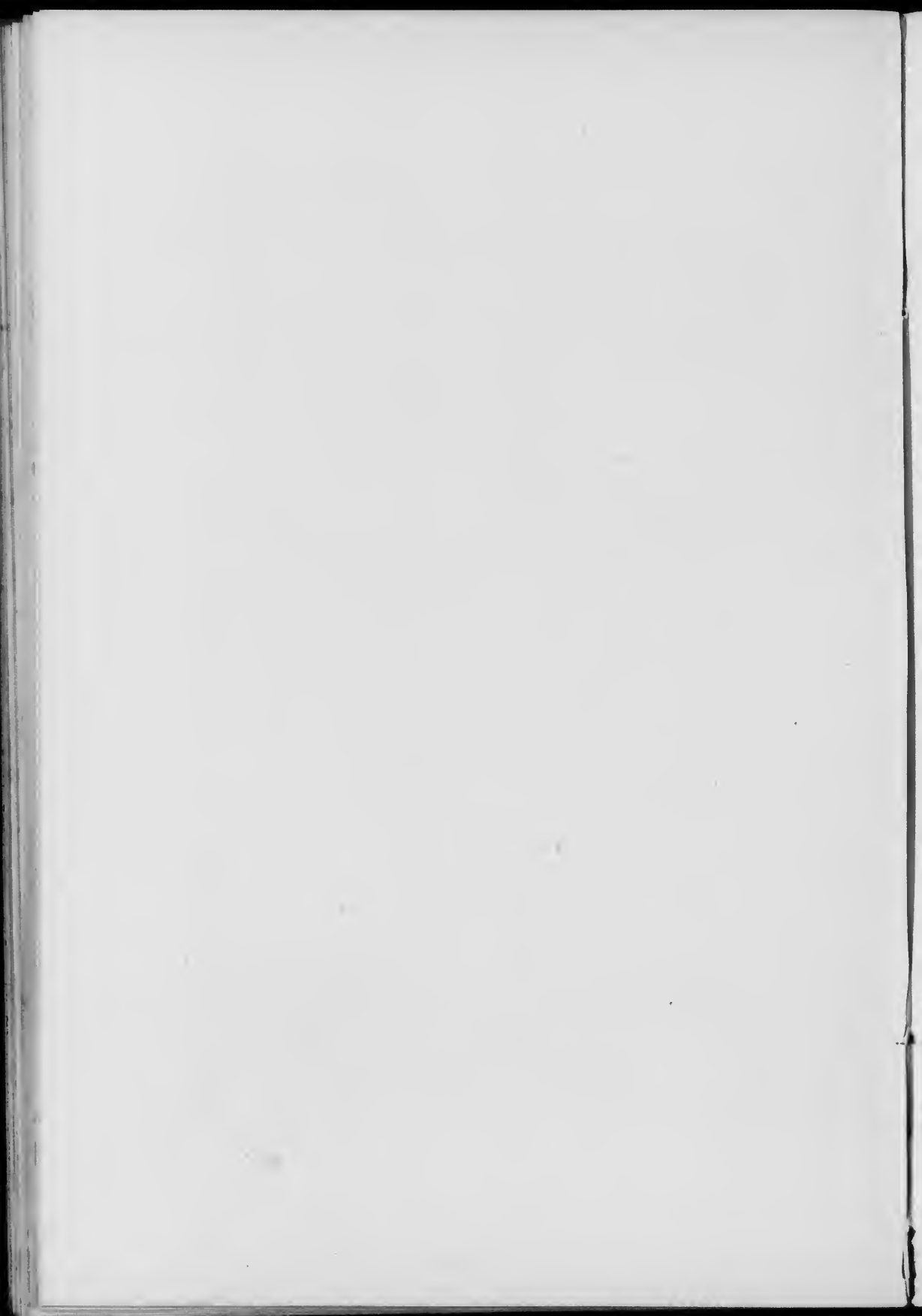
(1) "We came to Manchester between one and two" (then follows the account of the service at Salford Cross, given in the previous chapter). "About six we reached Davy-Hulme, five miles from Manchester, where I was much refreshed both in preaching and meeting the society. Their neighbours here used to disturb them much; but a Justice of Peace, who feared God, granting them a warrant for the chief of the rioters, from that time they were in peace."

Mr. Wesley visited Davyhulme five times in all, and though these visits were spread over a space of thirty-two years, it may be well to quote together here the brief records contained in his journals referring to them.

(2) *Monday, August 29th, 1748.*—"I preached at Davy-Hulme. I had heard a surprising account concerning a young woman of Manchester, which I now received from her own mouth. She said: 'On Friday, the 4th of last March, I was sitting in the house while one read the Passion-Hymn. I had always before thought myself good enough, having constantly gone to church and said my prayers, nor had I ever heard any of the Methodist Preachers. On a sudden I saw our Saviour on the cross, as plain as if it had been with my bodily eyes; and I felt it was *my* sins for which he died. I cried out, and had no strength left in me. Whether my eyes were open or shut, he was still before me, hanging on the cross; and I could do nothing but weep and mourn, day and night. This lasted till Monday, in the afternoon. Then I saw, as it were, heaven open, and God sitting upon his throne in the midst



INTERIOR OF THE CHAPEL.



of ten thousand of his saints ; and I saw a large book in which all my sins were written ; and he blotted them all out, and my heart was filled with peace, and joy, and love, which I have never lost to this hour.'

"In the evening I preached at Booth Bank."

(3) *Thursday, October 19th, 1749.*—"At one I preached at Shackerley, four miles from Bolton, and thence rode on to Davy-Hulme. Here I received a letter from Richard Cawley, of Alpraham, with an invitation from the minister of Acton. After preaching in the morning at Davy-Hulme, and about ten at Boothbank, in the afternoon, Friday 20, I rode on, and between four and five came to Alpraham. A large congregation was waiting for me, whom I immediately called to seek God 'while he may be found.' Many came again at five in the morning, and seemed just ready not only to repent, but also to believe the Gospel."

(4) *Monday, April 2nd, 1753.*—"In the evening I preached at Manchester, and on Monday, April 2nd, at Davy-Hulme. Here I found, what I had never heard of in England, a whole clan of infidel peasants. A neighbouring alehouse-keeper drinks, and laughs, and argues into Deism all the ploughmen and dairymen he can light on. But no mob rises against him ; and reason good ; Satan is not divided against himself.

Wednesday, 4.—"I made an end of examining the society of Manchester, among whom were seventeen of the Dragoons."

(5) *Friday, April 2nd, 1779.* (This was Good Friday.) "About one I opened the new chapel at Davyhulme."

The building of a chapel a hundred years ago was no light matter. The society had existed for over thirty years; they had been favoured by the visits of the ablest ministers of the day, and had been in close touch with Booth Bank, Altrincham, and Manchester; but it was not until 1779 that they were enabled to erect a house of prayer.

Long before this, however, Davyhulme had become a missionary centre. From here Methodism spread to Carrington, Partington, Cadishead, Urmston, and across the river to Barton, Worsley, Walkden, and Swinton. So successful was the work at Barton, that it became necessary to build a chapel there in 1796, to provide for the increasing number of converts, and at each of the other places chapels were built at later periods.

In one respect Davyhulme had the honour of establishing a work which became so successful that it was soon followed in Manchester, and then in many other parts of the country, and led to a most gracious and widespread revival of the work of God. In the autobiography of Rev. John Morris (Mag. 1795), we are told that he was led to God in the old Birchen Lane Chapel. His parents were Roman Catholics, and he had been intended for a Catholic priest, but he became instead a Methodist preacher, and after his conversion accompanied Mr. Wesley and John Nelson in their preaching tours, visiting Northwich, Middleton, Chorlton, Davyhulme, Warrington, and many other places with them.

Writing of the year 1761, he says: "It was now im-

pressed upon my mind to solicit some of my brethren to assist me in establishing prayer meetings in different parts of the town ; but as this was a thing unheard of before, I could not at first prevail with any of them heartily to join with me. I therefore began at *Davyhulme*, and the Lord graciously blessed our endeavours ; many were convinced and converted, and some backsliders healed. This encouraged our Manchester friends to set up prayer meetings in the town, and a great work soon broke out which extended over England, Ireland, and America."

What a glorious history might be written on the work of "cottage prayer meetings!" How many of our strongest and most prominent Churches to-day have sprung from this humble origin! It is in these gatherings we get an ideal picture of what a Christian Church is—a company of faithful men met together in the name of Christ for fellowship, prayer, and praise. Meeting thus, they realised the blessed presence and divine power of their Master in their midst ; believers were quickened and unbelievers were converted.

As we have seen already, it was from such an origin the Church at Davyhulme sprang.

Amongst the early converts in these cottage services at Mr. Heywood's house was one, John Wood, who lived in the picturesque "black and white" cottage adjoining the chapel. His uncle, Mr. James Wood, was the father of Rev. Thomas Wood, M.A., an able and scholarly preacher, who died at Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1826, after having laboured for 39 years in our ministry.

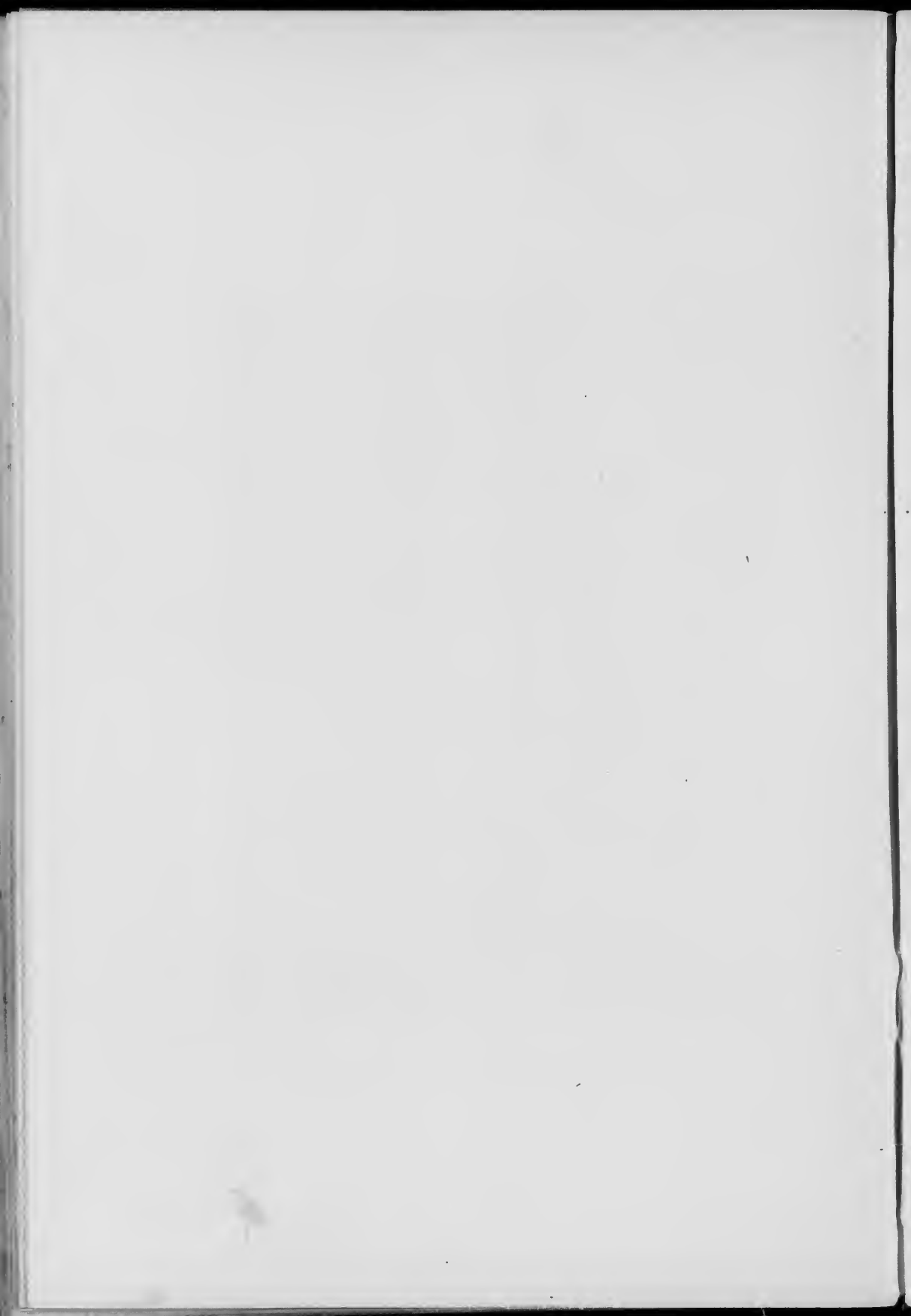
Through the influence of his uncle's pious life, and the preaching of Mr. Grimshaw, John Wood was led to God in the year 1755, being then 18 years of age. At once he began to labour for the salvation of those around him, and was much helped in this by Mr. Robert Heywood. Great success attended their labours, and many were converted.

John Wood was in the bleaching business, and his business took him much away from home, but whether at home or away he always made it a rule of life to observe with the utmost care and reverence the Sabbath Day. He used to call it his "Market Day." He was appointed a class leader and became a "father" to the society, and when the Sunday-school was founded he became much interested in its work. He most generously gave the land on which the chapel was built, and contributed handsomely to its erection. For many years he entertained the preachers, and it is said that the brick portion at the end of the house was added to give increased accommodation for this purpose. He manifested a deep, earnest yearning for the conversion of his neighbours, and often spoke and prayed about this. After a severe attack of rheumatism, brought on by the contraction of a cold, he died on February 25th, 1804, and his biography appeared in the "Magazine" of the following year. He lived faithfully and died triumphantly.

In all probability Mr. Wesley would rest at this house on some of his visits to Davyhulme, and tradition says that at the opening of the chapel the congregation was too



MR. JOHN WOOD'S HOUSE.



large to gain admittance to the building, and that Wesley came outside and preached from the horse block, which still stands in the garden of the cottage.

On a previous occasion we are told that Wesley preached under an old yew tree which stood at the corner of Davyhulme Road and Bent Lane. The tree was cut down in later years when the road was widened, and pieces of its trunk and branches are now scattered up and down the country and treasured as family heirlooms.

It is said that Pitt Street, Liverpool; Ridgway Gates, Bolton; and Davyhulme, are the only chapels left in Lancashire in which John Wesley preached.

It was not long before the new chapel became too small, notwithstanding the erection of the chapel at Barton in 1796, and it was found necessary to enlarge it in 1805. Since that time the outward appearance of the building has not undergone any material change, though a good deal of money has been spent from time to time on the interior. Now once more the chapel is found to be too small for the rapidly-increasing needs of the districts, and it is proposed in commemoration of the tri-jubilee of the founding of Methodism in Davyhulme to replace the present building by a new and more commodious structure. It may be of interest to give the names of the earliest trustees found on the Trust Deed of June 24th, 1805: Joseph Royle, weaver; Thomas Wood, whitster; John Wood, whitster; John Bent, manufacturer; John Wood, whitster; William Booth, weaver; James Harrison, weaver; John Barlow, weaver; Joseph Pearson, weaver; Edward Jones,

shoemaker ; John Booth, weaver ; William Dawson, weaver ; Thomas Armitt, weaver. The chapel was registered for marriages on 4th January, 1870.

Before passing away from the early history of the society, one other record of interest may be mentioned.

The conference held in London in 1749 ordered that Quarterly Meetings should be held in every circuit in the country. One of the earliest records of these meetings is of one held at Boothbank, a farmhouse near Bucklow Hill, in the parish of Rostherne, and about half way between Altrincham and Knutsford. This famous farmhouse was licensed for preaching in the year 1744, before there was any Methodist chapel in Manchester, and services were continued there until a chapel was erected in the village near by in 1834. For many years it was the centre of Methodism in Lancashire and Cheshire.

Mr. Wesley visited the farmhouse four times, and Messrs. Grimshaw, Nelson, Hopper, Jaco, Pawson, Guilford, Mather, Benson, John Bennett, and many other ministers preached in that truly consecrated sanctuary.

John and Alice Cross, the farmer and his wife, were remarkable characters—strong, rough, and uncultured. Mrs. Cross was converted first. Her conversion created a great sensation, and was the common talk of the district from Altrincham to Bucklow Hill. After her own conversion she assailed her husband in an irresistible manner, saying : “ Now, John, wilt thou go to heaven with me, for I am determined not to go to hell with thee ? ” Her force of character and purity of purpose were superior to all

opposition, and he yielded to the power of the truth, and became a most earnest and powerful worker. They at once made the largest room in the farmhouse into a preaching room, and fitted up a pulpit in one corner. The first Quarterly Meeting for the "Manchester Round" (see the Magazine for 1843, page 380) was held in this room, and the book in which the records of the meeting were entered has recently been found, and is a curious document. The first entry is dated *20th April, 1752*, and runs thus: "A true account of the money brought in by the Stewards from each Society in the Manchester Round for the use of the Preachers, and for the discharging of necessary expenses."

	£	s.	d.
ChesterBy John Pritchard	0	12	0
Alpraham „ Richard Cawley ...	0	12	0
Acton „ William Davison ...	0	7	0
Booth Bank „ John Cross	0	10	11
Oldfield Brow... „ William Johnson ...	0	8	0
Davy-Hulme „ Robert Heywood...	0	15	0
Shakerley „ John Hampson.....	0	4	0
Bolton „ George Eskrick.....	0	8	2
Bank House „ James Schofield ...	0	8	0
Astbury „ Jonathan Booth ...	0	5	6
Manchester „ Richard Barlow ...	2	3	5
Gadbrook „ Mary Webster	0	6	0

£7 0 0

The second quarterly meeting was held on June 29th, 1752, and the moneys were £8 2s. 11d.; on March 26th, 1753, the moneys were £13 13s. 7½d.; on May 23rd, 1763, the moneys were £33 12s. 1d.

The third and following meetings were held in Manchester.

It is of special interest to note both the presence and position of the name of Davyhulme in this list. The society must, even at that early period, have been in a flourishing condition, for the contribution taken by Robert Heywood was the second highest on the list, and stood next to Manchester.

CHAPTER III.

The Sunday and Day Schools.

THE honour of being the founder of Sunday-schools is generally attributed to Robert Raikes, of Gloucester, and the date of their origin to the year 1780. A letter from Mr. Raikes to the "Gentleman's Magazine," in 1784, drew the general attention of the country to this work, and Sunday-schools soon sprang up in all the large cities and towns, Manchester being among the number. Here the civil authorities were the first to take action, and they called a town's meeting to consider the question and decide upon their adoption. The success of the schools in Leeds and other places had been so manifest, that they were taken up by the public in Manchester, where large numbers of boys and girls were brought from all parts of the surrounding country and apprenticed to the cotton trade.

These young people, removed from the care of parents, were growing up neglected and in ignorance and vice. The Sunday-school became at once a refuge and a home, and in no other county in England are Sunday-schools so strong to-day in their number or influence as in Lancashire. A quotation from Mr. Wesley's journal, for the year 1786, may be of interest here as showing his view of the new movement.

Sunday, 18th.—"I preached morning and evening in Bingley Church. Before service I stepped into the Sunday-school, which contains 240 children, taught every Sunday by four masters and the curate; so many children are restrained from open sin, and taught a little good manners at least, as well as to read the Bible. I find these schools springing up everywhere I go. Perhaps God may have a deeper end therein than men are aware of. Who knows but some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians."

How John Wesley's heart would have rejoiced to see our day, when in very deed the school has become the nursery of the Church, and one of the mightiest moral and spiritual influences in the land.

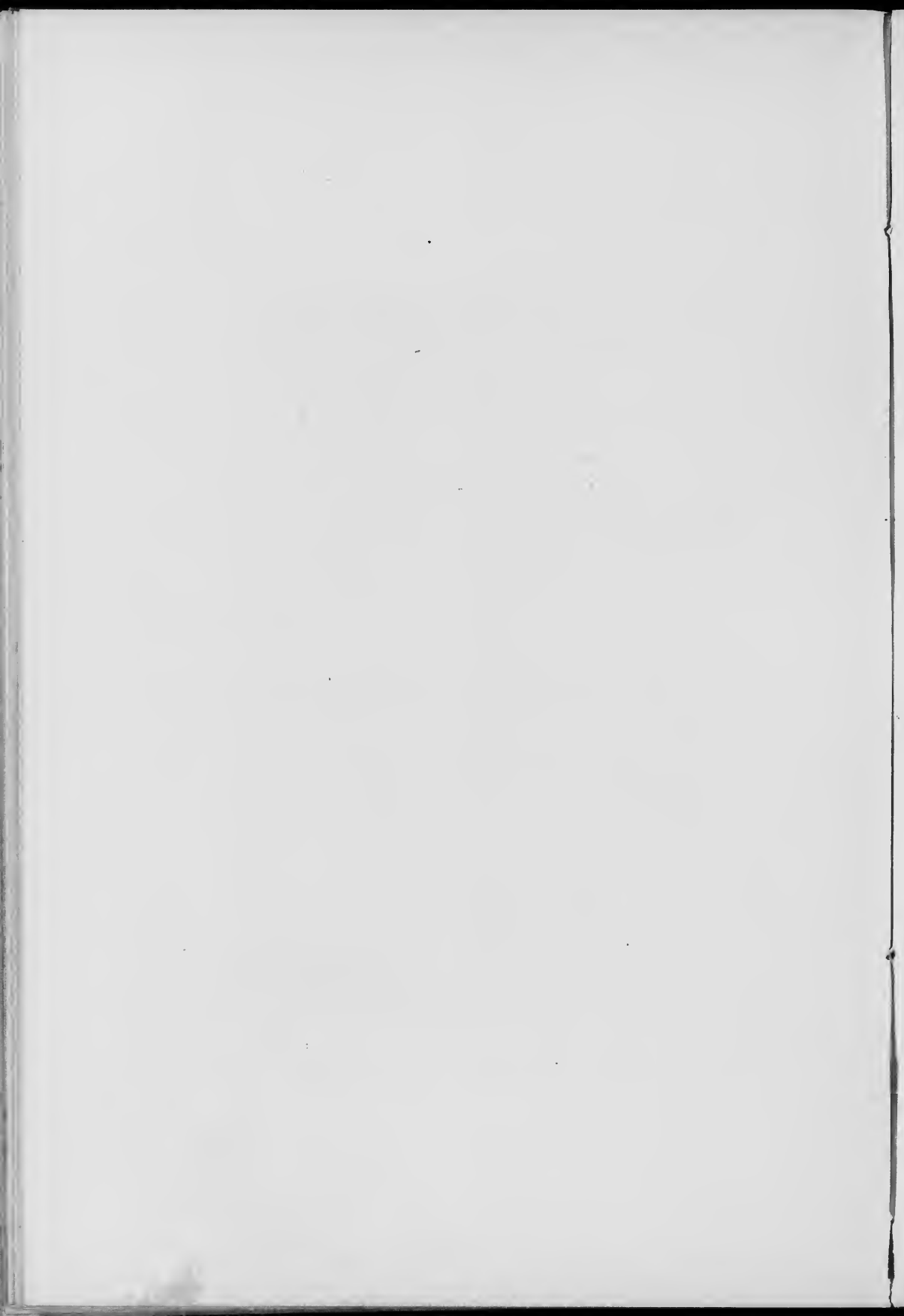
The work was commenced in Manchester in 1784, and placed under the management of "*a committee for the Sunday-schools for all denominations,*" and men of every shade of religious opinion took part. Funds were raised by means of subscriptions, and annual collections made in every church and chapel. In the first year 24 schools were organised.

Davyhulme again takes honourable precedence in the establishment of one of the first Wesleyan Sunday-schools.

In the autumn of 1785, Mr. James Bent, a weaver, who lived in Moorside Road, gathered the children from the surrounding cottages together in his loomshop on the Sabbath afternoons, for religious instruction. The loomshop soon became too small for the numbers of children who came, and early in the following year the



Mr. JAMES BENT'S HOUSE, Moorside Road.
(Where the Sunday-school was Founded.)



school was removed to the chapel, where it was carried on for 60 years. Mr. Lawrence Fogg then gave a piece of land for the erection of a school, which might be used as a day-school as well, should it afterwards be required for such a purpose.

A committee was formed, consisting of Messrs. Lawrence and William Fogg ; Wm. Rogerson, of Davyhulme ; William and John Booth, of Urmston ; and John Royle, of Flixton. The people gave liberally, and a plain but substantial large brick building, with three vestries, was erected at a cost of £900. The school was opened in 1846, and many still living remember the joyful celebrations of that day. Whether the time of building was accidental or otherwise we cannot say now, but it came at a most fitting time to celebrate the centenary of the founding of Methodism in Davyhulme.

From the very foundation of the school God's richest blessing has rested upon this work, and it has indeed been a nursery of the Church. From the school, scholars have gone forth to all parts of the world, and have become labourers in other parts of the Master's vineyard. Many have become "pillars in the house of God," and are carrying on a noble work for God, both at Davyhulme and elsewhere, whilst many more have been called home to their eternal reward. We rejoice to think that the school was never more hopeful than at the present day, with 241 scholars and 51 officers and teachers on the books.

The Day-school.

Eight years after the opening of the building it was decided to found a Day-school for the education of the children of our people and of the district.

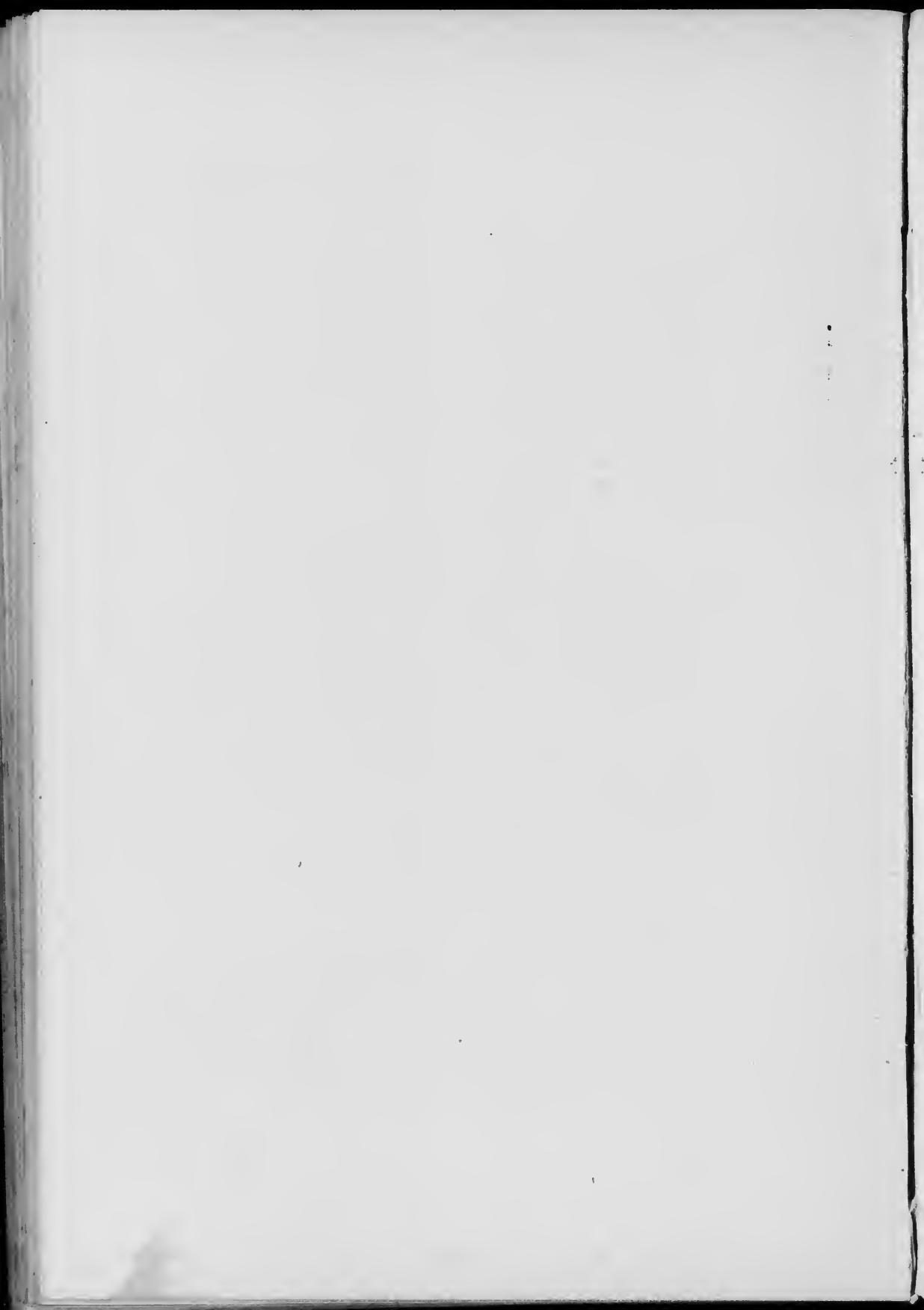
Mr. T. Sharland, who had received a training at the Westminster College, was selected as the first schoolmaster. The difficulties under which the school was founded may be gathered from the following notes given by Mr. Sharland : " My first remembrance of Davyhulme Chapel was of an evening, when I had reached it through a lane of snow four or five feet deep, cut through the Moorside Road. It was dimly lit with oil lamps, had high pew backs, and looked cold and large. After waiting some time, the Rev. Robert Leake appeared to conduct the week-night service, at the close of which I had to take his place and tremblingly allude to the principles on which I hoped to open and conduct the new Day-school. . . .

The school I opened under great difficulties ; for six months I had only the bare rooms, with forms and tea tables, with which, unaided, to conduct the education of sixty children, some of them as big as myself, and it was not till June was well advanced that desks and a gallery, then an important feature in a school, were supplied."

Under Mr. Sharland's able management the success of the school soon became apparent, and we are glad to be able to say that from its foundation to the present time the school has won the highest reports from her Majesty's inspectors.



THE SCHOOL.



On February 4th, 1857, within three years of its commencement, the inspector was able to report that there were present 103 children, with two pupil teachers, with the following remark appended: "This is a school of rare excellence. The master has the best qualifications of a useful and successful teacher, and has devoted them to the school with praiseworthy care and diligence. The school itself is a model of neatness and good order, and the instruction is such as to educate, as well as inform the minds of the scholars."

The reports of subsequent years show that this high state of efficiency has been more than maintained, notwithstanding the ever-increasing demands of the Education Department. Since the school was opened, in 1854, there have been eight masters who have had charge of the school in succession, and as it may be of interest to those whose early scholastic training was received within these walls, their names and tenure of office are appended:—

NAME.	TENURE OF OFFICE.
Mr. Thomas Sharland...	1854 to 1862.
Mr. Edward Harrision...	1862 to Dec., 1864.
Mr. J. A. Thorpe.....	Jan, 1865, to Dec., 1868.
Mr. James Lightfoot	Jan., 1869, to Dec., 1869.
Mr. Robert Fitzgeorge...	Jan., 1870, to Aug., 1874.
Mr. David L. Jones	Aug., 1874, to June, 1877.
Mr. W. J. Lewis	July, 1877, to Sept., 1877.
Mr. James Hudson	Sept., 1877.

CHAPTER IV.

Reminiscences.

IN the previous chapters we have traced the history, as far as we have been able to gather it, of the founding of Methodism in Davyhulme, and of the building of the chapel and school; but no history of a Church would be complete which recorded merely the erection of the material fabric of bricks and mortar, and left unnoticed the building of the spiritual Church of living stones.

Here, more than ever, one could wish that this work had been undertaken years ago, whilst many of the godly men and women who lived and laboured here were yet alive, and whilst the memories of many more were still fresh.

Few Churches in Methodism have been honoured of God with such a roll of holy men and women as that associated with Davyhulme. Whilst we thank God, however, for such an heritage, we pray that He may ever save us from that terrible danger of living on past memories, and resting satisfied with past blessings. We would rather seek for a "double portion" of the spirit of our fathers, and pray that we may be able to serve our day and generation, by the will of God, as faithfully as they served theirs.

Preachers.

Having a history that extends over a century and a half, and being from the very commencement connected with one of the chief circuits of Methodism, Davyhulme has been favoured with the ministrations of many of the ablest ministers of the Connexion. Would space permit, many pages might be filled with memoirs of the preachers who have laboured in this circuit.

In the earlier pages of this book it will be remembered it was stated that out of the converts gathered into the first society class several useful preachers were raised up. Unfortunately, of only one of these does it appear that any biographical notes have come down to us. This was a Mr. Robert Costerdine, whose autobiography appeared in the Magazine for 1814. He was born in Flixton in 1726. By the persuasion of his wife he went to hear the Methodists in 1748, probably in the house of Mr. Robert Heywood, and was deeply impressed under a sermon by John Nelson, on Micah vi., 8. Soon after, he heard Mr. Whitefield, and for several weeks following was in great distress of mind. He says "he found peace on the evening of November 25th, 1748, at 10 o'clock in the evening." He at once joined the society, and was soon after made a class leader. In this work he was impressed by a call to preach the gospel, and he was admitted as a local preacher in 1759, and as he travelled through the circuit his labours were much blessed. In 1764 he was accepted by the Conference as a "travelling

preacher," and sent to labour in the Epworth Circuit, then 600 miles round, and what was known as a "twelve weeks' circuit." He travelled for 29 years, chiefly in Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, and Lancashire, and when his strength failed him he returned to his own home at Flixton, where he continued preaching and leading a class as far as his failing health permitted. He met his class the night before his last illness. He died at the ripe age of 85, in the year 1811, and his remains lie buried in Flixton Churchyard, side by side with many more of God's saintly workers.

As we look through the list of ministers appointed to this circuit during the past 130 years, what a phalanx of men of spiritual and intellectual power is spread before us! In the early days are the names of Jaco, Greenwood, Pawson, Mather, Thomas Taylor, John Murlin, Christopher Hopper, Duncan Wright, and Alexander McNab. These were followed by Dr. Adam Clarke (the renowned scholar and commentator), Joseph Benson (another able commentator), Samuel Bradburn (the famous orator), Jabez Bunting, James Everett (leader of the triple alliance, Everett, Dunn, and Griffiths), Wm. O. Booth, Robert Maxwell, Israel Holgate, Barnard Slater, W. W. Stamp, and Benjamin Slack.

These were followed later by others whose ministries are remembered with thankfulness to God by many still living: Gervase Smith, Robert Leake, James Loutit, John S. Workman, W. H. Taylor, Walford Green, James H. Rigg, James Chalmers, Humphrey Jutsum, and David Ingram.

Under the ministries of Mr. Loutit and Mr. Workman especially, the circuit enjoyed a season of great prosperity, and the membership rose from 500 to over 1,000. Mr. Loutit was a Shetlander, cut off from wealth with a shilling because he would be a Methodist preacher instead of a lawyer—a quaint, strong, firm character. Mr. Workman was always a most popular preacher, and his preaching attracted immense crowds.

Bradburn and Benson were amongst the last of the preachers who wore the powdered wig. The use of this headdress died out in Methodism at the close of last century, probably owing to the strong anti-French feeling existing at that period, as it was regarded as a badge of the French aristocrat.

Dr. Clarke never wore the wig, but there are many stories told about the unclerical hats he wore, and his blue suits with brass buttons

James Everett says of him: "He might have been seen passing along the streets, a lank figure, with long hair, a blue coat and a three-cornered cocked hat, taking long strides, as if measuring the ground."

He was first appointed to Manchester in 1791, on account of his failing health, and was stationed here that he might be able to avail himself of the waters at Buxton. His visits to Buxton contributed largely to his temporary restoration, but the ailment returned. He was stationed at Manchester again in 1803, 1815, and 1820-3, probably for the same reason, and on the plans for the latter dates there was a footnote, stating, "Dr. Clarke's precarious

state of health preventing his being regularly planned, due notice will be previously given of the days on which he is expected to preach."

There are several amusing stories told of him. Probably on account of his ill-health, it was a firm rule never to sleep away from home at night. On one occasion, however, when taking the week-night service at Davyhulme, so severe a storm raged at the close of the service that the friends of the "chapel house" persuaded him to stay for the night rather than walk all the way back to his residence in Oldham Street.

After supper and family worship, the doctor retired to bed, and was soon sound asleep. For Mrs. Clarke, however, there was no such sweet repose. After the usual hour for her husband's return had passed, she restlessly paced the house, repeating the exclamation: "Adam, where art thou?" Again and again she knocked at the bedroom door of the young minister who lived with them, and asked, "What could have befallen her Adam to make him so late?" At last, growing weary of the constant disturbance, the young minister rose, dressed, and walked out to Davyhulme, reaching the chapel house at two o'clock in the morning. After knocking loudly at the door, the head of the doctor appeared out of the window, and asked, "What is the matter?" A stentorian voice replied, "Is Adam Clarke here?" "Yes," replied the Doctor. "Tell him he's wanted at home, immediately," came the voice again from below; and the poor doctor, in anxious fear and haste, dressed and returned home with

his young colleague. Nearing home, Mrs. Clarke was quick to recognise the footsteps, and the door was thrown open to receive them. Reaching the steps, the young man got behind his superintendent, pushed him into his wife's arms, and exclaimed, "There's your Adam—tak' him!"

One more story may be told which illustrates the the doctor's ready wit. On one occasion, it is said, he wrote to Mr. Wesley to tell him that his exchequer was empty. In his laconic style, Wesley wrote: "Dear Adam,—‘Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.’—Yours, &c., J. Wesley." And with characteristic generosity he enclosed two £5 notes.

Dr. Clarke replied: "Dear Mr. Wesley,—I have often read that text, but I never before saw such beautiful notes upon it.—Yours, &c., Adam Clarke."

One other name ought not to be omitted from this chapter, and that is Dr. Robert Moffatt, the celebrated African missionary. It will always be a matter for thankful and proud remembrance that Dr. Moffatt, when a young man, was a worshipper and worker at Davyhulme. Leaving his native home in Scotland, he obtained a situation as gardener at High Leigh, in Cheshire. At Leigh he was led to the Methodist chapel, and there found Christ, and then joined the society. Not many weeks after, the leadership of the class fell vacant, and Dr. Beaumont said, "Make the Scotch lad the leader"; and he was accordingly appointed.

Then came his visit to the missionary meeting at

Warrington, and the first call of God to the mission field. Shortly after this, the Methodist Conference was held in Manchester, and Moffatt, with a companion, Clarke the blacksmith, walked into Manchester to hear some of the celebrated preachers of the day.

In the forenoon they sat under Robert Newton ; in the afternoon Moffatt went to hear Rev. Wm. Roby, of Grosvenor Street Congregational Chapel, who had presided at the Warrington Missionary Meeting. He felt constrained to visit Mr. Roby, and tell him of his desire to become a missionary, and he did so shortly after.

Mr. Roby was struck with the young man, but acted cautiously, and he devised the scheme of securing him a situation near Manchester, so that Moffatt could come and see him from time to time, until he could form a judgment as to his fitness. Mr. Roby at length secured a place with a Mr. Smith, who kept a shop in Deansgate and a nursery garden at Flixton, and Moffatt was engaged to look after the garden. This garden stood in olden days at the corner of Western Road and Flixton Road, and, though the garden itself has been given up, the house still stands in which Moffatt lived, and the window of the room he made his study looks out on to Flixton Road, as seen in the accompanying illustration. Moffatt took up his abode here, attended to the garden, and devoted his spare time to the study of such books as Mr. Roby directed. During his residence here he frequently attended the Davyhulme Chapel, and in all probability would often be found at the Methodist class meeting. He fell in love with and sub-



THE COTTAGE IN WHICH Dr. MOFFATT LIVED.



sequently married Mary, the daughter of his master, who became the mother of the brave wife of David Livingstone.

In 1816 Moffatt was accepted by the London Missionary Society, and sent out to South Africa. Twenty years after, he returned to England for a rest and to print his SECHUANA translation of the Bible, and came to reside at the old cottage at Flixton, where he corrected his proofs. Many people to-day come to visit this old cottage, and amongst the most recent visitors has been a grand-daughter of Dr. Moffatt.

Lovefeasts.

Amongst the services peculiar to Methodism none have been so great a factor in the building up of stalwart Christian character as the class meeting and the lovefeast.

One hopes the day may never come when this element of spiritual fellowship, which was the most prominent feature in the life of the primitive Church in the New Testament, shall lose its place in our modern Church life. One regrets that the lovefeasts have now to be held at the close of the service on Sunday evening, when the time must necessarily be short. But the spirit of the age, and the multifarious demands upon our time, compel short services. The rush of life has made its way into the Church, and the very atmosphere in which we live is charged with feverish haste and consuming intensity. We are in danger of building superficial character, and

losing that robustness which marked our fathers, and which can only be obtained by "waiting" upon God.

In olden times the lovefeasts were held on Sunday afternoons, and the whole afternoon was devoted to the service. An old member from Barton, who now resides at Cardiff, has very kindly sent a deeply interesting account of the grand meetings held at Davyhulme, to which her father, an old local preacher, brought her first as a child. Many times she walked across the fields from Barton to attend these meetings, and others came from miles around. The service began at two o'clock, and often lasted until five.

In later times the lovefeasts were held at Urmston Hall, then occupied by Mr. John Booth. He deeply loved these meetings, and often remarked, "They always say there's a blessing for those who come to a lovefeast, but a double blessing for those who speak ; so I always go in for the two."

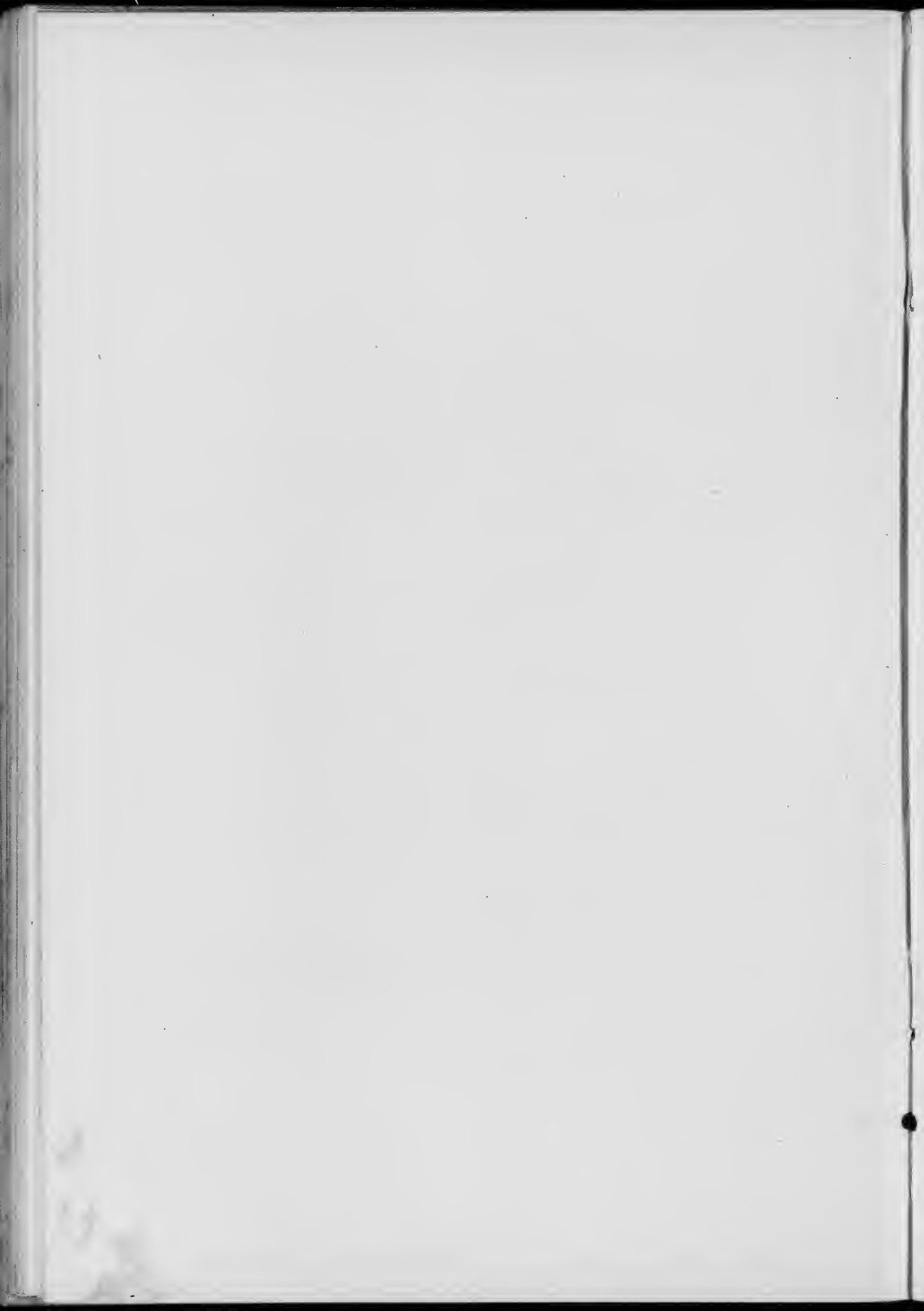
All the spiritual power of the Church seemed to gather round these meetings, and the experiences were full of vital, soul-stirring energy.

It is quite a spiritual tonic to sit in the homes of the old members and hear of some of those grand saints of former days who have now gone home to their eternal rest.

As I sat thus in an ancient cottage one day, and the master of the house opened his heart to tell me of these olden times, I jotted down a few notes as he talked, and I venture to give them here as nearly as possible in his



URMSTON HALL.



own words, as they may recall memories of blessed experiences to some who read these pages, and help to keep fresh the names of these servants of God in the minds of the younger generation growing up.

I give them, without any attempt to put them in order, simply as they came one after another to his memory :

“There were *Booth Speakman* and *Thomas Woodnett*, class leaders, and thorough good Christian men of the old type, with a homely way of expressing themselves. There was *John Pollitt*, superintendent of the school for a number of years, and first superintendent in the new school. Then there was *John Hart*, of Croft’s Bank ; he always sat in the gallery, and was a good hearer. When anything pleased him in the sermon he would respond, ‘Aye!’ ‘Good!’

Thomas Pearson, another good man, but a little eccentric. The preacher one morning dropped his voice, and Thomas cried out, ‘Man, don’t drop your voice so ; we want to hear it all.’

Then there was *John Royle*, the baker, in Green Lanes, a good man and a teacher in the school, and the other Royles, too, Job, and Joseph, and James.

Butcher Booth—he lived at Urmston, and used to hold cottage services in his house before they had the chapel at Urmston. He was a class leader, and was of a poetic turn of mind, fond of quoting and even composing verses. He was well known for his earnestness in prayer, and the preachers often called on him to pray. He had a strong influence over the young people. I remember hearing

of him that he was one day going to meet Sammy Hick, at Partington, on his way to a missionary meeting. He made his speech as he was going along the river side, and afterwards forgot it. To get out of his difficulty he told Sammy if he would only speak for him he would keep him for a week. Sammy spoke, stopped with him for a week, and they had a good week's work at the chapel.

Wm. Gregory Taylor was a grand man: he was chapel steward. He was no talker, but a good worker, and a great giver. He never let his right hand know what his left hand did. Many a time he'd shake hands with an old woman and leave half a crown behind.

William Pearson, one of the oldest and best-known class leaders—earnest and godly; he lived in Davyhulme Lane.

William Rogerson, another class leader and conductor of the school. The ministers were always welcome at his house.

William Clare, class leader and conductor. He lived at the smithy. His wife and he both entered into rest on the same day. Theirs, too, was the home of many ministers.

John Rogerson, who lived at Tann House Farm. For a long time he was a teacher in the school and Society Steward. He was a great temperance worker, too, and most strict in the observance of the Sabbath.

John Hooson lived at the corner of Brook Lane. He was a wonderful man in prayer, and sometimes hardly

knew whether he was in the body or out. He was often so lost in thought that he would come to school without his hat.

Thomas Carter was a most earnest man in prayer and a conductor of the school.

Thomas Rogerson was another conductor and teacher of the select class. He had a splendid class of young men, and a splendid society class, too. The vestry used to be full of a class night.

George Bennett, a class leader, and for a long time chapel-keeper; he was followed by *James Bent*.

Peter Bent was another class leader, and he lived at the corner of Brook Road.

Then there were a lot more, and good men they were, too: *Thomas Barlow*, librarian of the school; *Thomas Wood*, son of John Wood, who gave the land for the chapel; *Titus Barlow*; *Daniel Bradshaw*, whose tablet is put up in the chapel. He was a most liberal supporter of Foreign Missions, and often took the chair at the missionary meetings. We used to have grand missionary meetings in those days, and many a time the boys used to bring sparrows and let them loose in the chapel.

Thomas and Mary Harrison, William Hooson, James Booth, Robert Goldsworthy, William Whatmough, and many another."

So my friend related his experiences, and give me these brief but graphic character sketches of those who had once been "pillars in the house of God," and have now received the reward given to those who overcome, and have entered into that temple above, whence they shall go no more out.

In 1860 a brief memoir was published by the late Mr. George J. Hargreaves of another beautiful life—Mrs. Ellen Booth. Davyhulme has been blessed not only with godly men, but with many godly women, who have indeed been “Mothers in Israel.” Such was Mrs. Booth. She came from Ashton-on-Mersey to live at Flixton about the close of last century, and was led to God under the ministry of Rev. Walter Griffiths during a revival at Davyhulme in 1806, when at the age of 35. She joined the society at once, and always looked forward to the class meeting with unspeakable pleasure. Her leaders were delighted with her deep experience of the things of God. She was always a friend of the poor, and helped many in their distress. A hard worker herself, she taught her children that they were never to be idle. She died full of peace and joy in the eighty-ninth year of her age, after having lived in the favour of God fifty-four years.

One cannot close this chapter without referring to one more subject, which, throughout the history of Davyhulme, has been a prominent feature in the services of the sanctuary—

The Choir.

To-day we live in the height of fashion and possess an organ, but it is only in recent times we have submitted to this modern intrusion of what the Scotchman called “a box of whistles.”

In the olden days we had an orchestra, and an orchestra that did its best to rival the famous band of Nebuchadnezzar.

As my old friend referred to above ran his mind over the congregation of former days, he at length turned from the seats below to the seats above, and when he came to the "singing pew," his face, radiant before, beamed with delight as he seemed to hear again the glorious harmony of those old fiddles and flutes. He told me the names of some of the members of the choir as far as he could remember them: "There was James Pinnington and William Irlam, both with their double bass; there was Dicky Bradburn and Thomas Clare, with their flutes; Job Wood, with his cornet; Joseph Barlow and J. Rogerson, leading singers; John Rogers, Samuel Bent, Miss Irlam, James Gilbody, David Bradburn and his sister Sarah, Mary Taylor, George Aldred, Philip Wood, Thomas Muddiman, John Giddes, Samuel and James Wood, Samuel Hulme, Eliza Taylor and Eliza Harrop, Alice Irlam (who married Philip Wood), William Owen, and Anne Pears." How many more might be added to this list, would space permit! They played and sang unto the Lord, and the Lord heard and accepted their songs of praise.

Though the old fiddles have gone, we are thankful that the singing has not lost its character, for to-day we have the most hearty congregational singing to be heard for many miles around. What a treat it is when the minister gives out Hymn 681, "All hail the power of Jesu's name," and the organ strikes the old familiar tune, "*Diadem*."

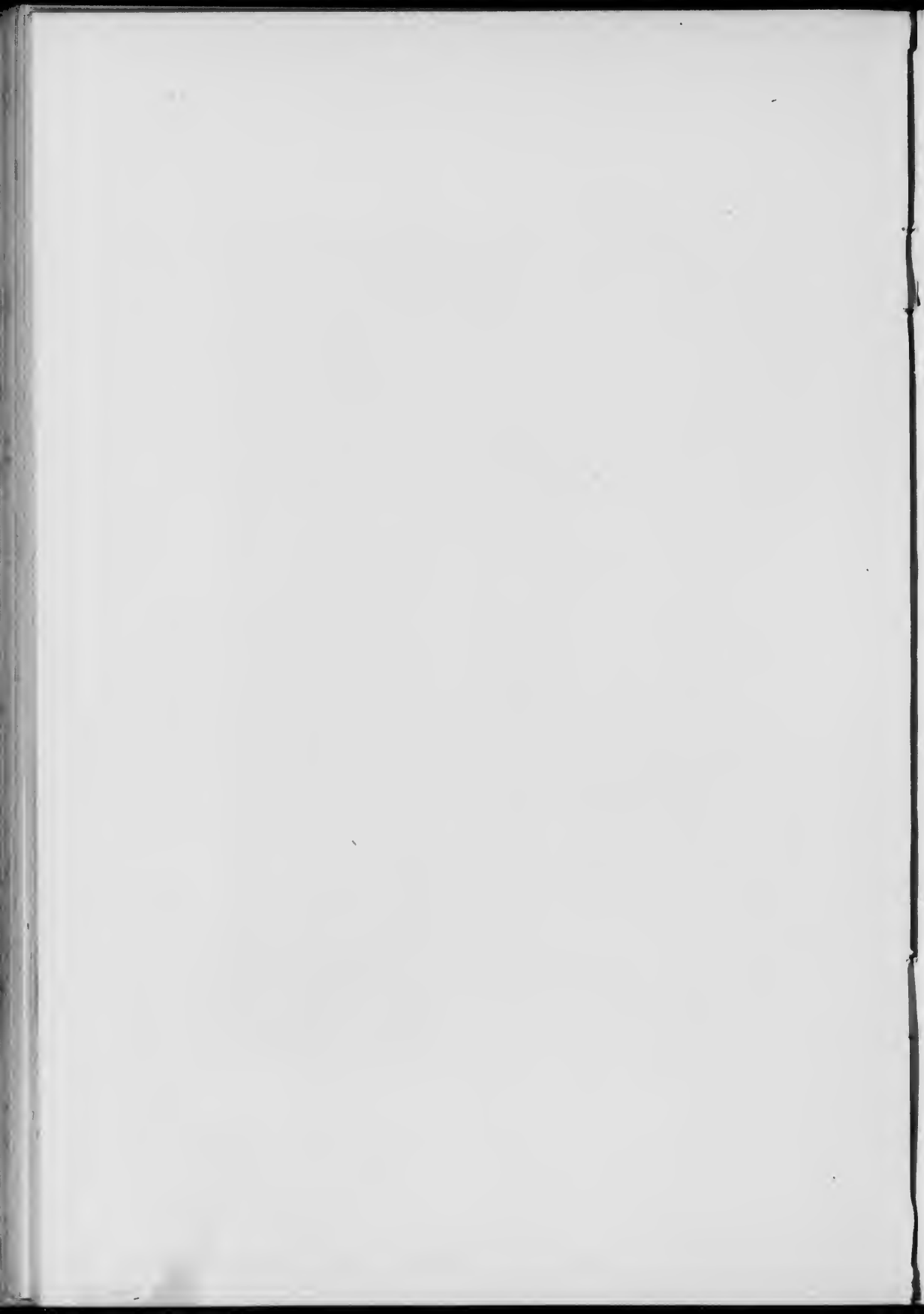
To hear this for the first time is an inspiration never to be forgotten.

Then, what a grand day "Anniversary Sunday" is! It generally falls on the last Sunday in June. One would wish for comfort's sake it came at an earlier date, when the weather was cooler, but we can fortunately do without gas at this time of the year, and people do not mind even sitting in a draught on this occasion. The chapel is packed from floor to ceiling; the old bass fiddles and flutes reappear as if raised from the grave; the children dress in their white summer costumes; and even the organ is almost drowned by the grand volume of music from choir and orchestra. From far and near the old scholars come for this event, and the proceeds are divided between the Day and Sunday schools.

In turning over the leaves of an old chapel steward's account book, it was amusing to see some of the entries for chapel expenses. The bass fiddles appear not infrequently with such items as these: "Repairing the bass fiddle, 1s. 2d."; "Received for the hire of the bass fiddle, 1s."; "Three yards of string for the fiddle bag, 3d." Regularly every quarter there was an entry for "moulded candles" for the pulpit, and a salary was given not only to the chapel keeper, but to the chapel steward. At first he received £1 per year, but the duties evidently became so heavy that in 1861 the allowance was raised to £2. Those were evidently the "good old days." Our stewards now perform the duties without an honorarium, and I am not aware that it is done less faithfully because done as "a freewill offering unto the Lord."



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, FLIXTON.



These rambling reminiscences must now be drawn to a close. Much, perhaps, has been left out that an old inhabitant might have been able to add, and much could have been more ably written by one familiar with the chapel and the people by long residence. At best, these notes, penned by a passing visitor, can only inadequately deal with such a subject; but they have been written with the object of collecting and preserving such records as are obtainable of the history of this time-honoured sanctuary, now one of the oldest in Methodism, before they are all irretrievably lost.

As such they are offered to the members of the Church, and to all others who take an interest in the work of God at Davyhulme.

Origin of the Name Davyhulme.

The origin of the name is somewhat uncertain. The old hall was the seat of John de Hulme, in the reign of Henry II., and possibly the district received its name from the Hulme family, the prefix "Davy" being a contraction for David.

The name has had many forms of spelling. The old Court Leet records give three distinct ways. In 1559 it is spelt *Deaf Hulme*; in 1566, *Deweye Holme*; in 1735, *Davy Hulme*.

Dr. Adam Clarke gives three ways of spelling the name in his Journal.

"January 11th, 1792. Preached at *Daveyholme*, on Luke v., 17. The power of God was indeed present to heal."

"Sunday, February 19th, 1792. Preached at *Davey Hulme*, on Genesis xii., 5; and at Oldham Street, on Mark x., 46. I am sure God did much good by both."

"March 18th, 1792. At *Davyhulme*, a very sore journey. Preached on Lam. iii., 22, 23, and had much liberty."

There is also another interesting meaning of the name Hulme, which may have some connection with the derivation, either distinct from or in connection with the Hulme family, to whom the hall belonged.

Hulme is an old Saxon word which meant a flat island in a river, or the low meadow land, almost an island, by the banks of a curving river. These meadows along the banks of the Irwell may have been "David's meadow," hence Davy-Hulme.



